

REMEDATION AND REDEVELOPMENT (RR) NEWS FROM WISCONSIN DNR November 12, 2003

NEW SITE ASSESSMENT GRANT APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE

An updated application form and instructions for the fifth round of DNR's Site Assessment Grants (SAGs) are now on the web. These grants help fund initial activities and investigations at known or suspected contaminated properties. Applications are due February 13, 2004 for large (up to \$100,000) and small (up to \$30,000) grants. Local governments including cities, villages, towns, counties, tribes, and redevelopment, community and housing authorities are eligible. SAG funding may be used to conduct Phase I and II Environmental Site Assessments; site investigations; asbestos removal associated with demolition; and removal of abandoned containers and underground storage tanks. These grants have helped begin investigation and cleanup at 554 acres in 84 communities since 1998. DNR has \$1.7 million available for the fifth round, and another \$1.7 million will be available for SAG in the following fiscal year. For more information about the SAG program please see <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/rr/rbrownfields/sag.htm> or contact Andrew Savagian at 608-261-6422 or andrew.savagian@dnr.state.wi.us.

WISCONSIN'S READY FOR REUSE INITIATIVE

Wisconsin's "Ready for Reuse" initiative would "leave no brownfield behind". DNR is seeking public input on formation of the Wisconsin Brownfields Coalition (WBC) in order to apply to EPA for \$3 to 4 million in federal funds. Members of the WBC would be DNR, the departments of Commerce and Administration, as well as Wisconsin's regional planning commissions. The WBC would use EPA funds to establish a revolving loan fund (RLF) to address Wisconsin brownfields. If funded by EPA, Wisconsin's RLF would be administered by DNR in cooperation with the other WBC members and would provide sub-grants and low or no-interest loans (at least 60% of the funding) to local governments including counties, cities, villages, towns, and tribal authorities for brownfield investigation and cleanup. Local governments could use these funds to "jump start" redevelopment and to partner with developers and leverage private investment at brownfield trouble spots. The WBC's application is due to EPA December 4, and should be available for public comment on November 24 on the RR Program's web site. For more information, please see <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/rr/rbrownfields/wbc.pdf>, or contact Percy Mather at percy.mather@dnr.state.wi.us or at 608-266-9263.

DECEMBER 4 FEDERAL BROWNFIELD GRANT DEADLINE APPROACHING

Local governments that are interested in making their own direct application to EPA for one or more EPA brownfield grant will need a letter of support from DNR. Requests for these letters must be made by November 20. In addition, applicants should begin their required public notification process now. The three types of federal brownfield grants are: 1) assessment grants (up to \$200,000 or more over two years) for inventory, assessment and planning; 2) revolving loan fund grants (up to \$1,000,000 over five years) for capitalization of a revolving loan fund and subgrants and 3) cleanup grants (up to \$200,000 over two years) for environmental cleanup at sites owned by the grant recipient. For more information about these grants, please see http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/rr/financial/federal_brfls.html.

FEDERAL BROWNFIELDS TAX INCENTIVE -- GONE BY DECEMBER 31?

Unless Congress extends it, a federal brownfields tax incentive initiated in 1997 will expire at the end of 2003. This brownfields incentive is a deduction available to taxpayers, including responsible parties, for "qualified environmental remediation expenses" at contaminated sites that are used in trade or business in the year that the expenses are paid. A tax advisor can provide more information about eligible costs. A bill has been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives to extend the deadline, but there is no companion bill in the Senate and it appears unlikely that Congress will extend the measure before the end of the year. Wisconsin leads the nation with 21 sites where this deduction has been applied. For more information about this incentive see the RR web site at http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/rr/financial/fed_tax.html

NORTHEAST REGION SCHEDULES CONSULTANT DAY MARCH 31

DNR's Northeast Region and the Federation of Environmental Technologists (FET) are co-sponsoring a one-day seminar for environmental consultants dealing with contaminated properties on Wednesday, March 31st, 2004. This Consultant Day will be at Liberty Hall, 800 Eisenhower Drive in Kimberly, with registration from 8am to 8:30 and discussions until 4 pm. The cost is \$90 (\$60 for DNR and Department of Commerce staff), including lunch. More information and registration information will be available in late November. Look in the upcoming FET newsletter, the RR News from DNR or ReNews for agenda topics and a registration form. If you have questions please contact FET at 262-644-0070, fax 262-644-7106 or email fet@hnet.net.

DATABASE OF GEOLOGIC INFORMATION ON CD-ROM

The Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey has announced availability of a digital database containing a wealth of geologic information about Wisconsin. The database, wiscLITH, has been compiled from nearly 45,000 records maintained by the Survey. The information is primarily detailed descriptions of rock types including stratigraphy and lithology encountered during well drilling. It's organized in tables and forms and queries supplied with wiscLITH allow users to view, sort, select and evaluate the information. The Survey anticipates that wiscLITH will be useful to planners, environmental consultants and regulators, water-supply engineers and drillers and earth-science researchers. The wiscLITH CD-ROM may be purchased for \$25 from the Map Sales office of the Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey at 3817 Mineral Point Road, Madison, Wisconsin 53705-5100. MasterCard and Visa customers may telephone their orders to 608-263-7389 between 8 am and 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday. Shipping and handling charges are extra. The Survey, a part of the University of Wisconsin-Extension, has responsibility for the survey of Wisconsin's geological, mineral, and soil resources, and shares responsibility for surveying water and biological resources. For more information about wiscLITH, visit <http://www.uwex.edu/wgnhs/> or contact Madeline Gotkowitz at 608-262-1580 or at mbgotkow@wisc.edu.

NEW IMPROVED VPLE INFORMATION ON THE WEB

We've revamped our information on the web about Voluntary Party Liability Exemptions (VPLEs), including more examples to help explain the VPLE process as well as before and after photos. We've also listed 125 other properties currently enrolled in the VPLE process, and added new information about VPLE requirements with links to forms, fact sheets, and regulations. The VPLE process covers investigation and clean up of a contaminated property with a certificate offering exemption from future liability for that contamination at the end of the cleanup. The certificate can be transferred to future property owners. Any party can apply for a VPLE, including prospective purchasers, local governments and businesses that caused the contamination. Applicants for the VPLE pay DNR review fees for oversight of their environmental investigations and cleanups. The RR Program has now issued 34 certificates of completion for VPLEs in Wisconsin. Our VPLE examples on the web are organized by DNR regions – see the web navigation sidebar on the left at: http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/rr/liability/vple_success.html. Our main VPLE page is at: http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/rr/liability/purchasers_0.html. For more information about the VPLE process contact Michael Prager at 608-261-4927 or at michael.prager@dnr.state.wi.us. Other RR Program success stories can be found at: http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/aw/rr/cleanup/rr_success.htm.

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